

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 5 have been amended.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 1, 5 and 9 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by the Oochi, et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2005/0179779) published application. The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 2, 3, 6 and 7 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Oochi, et al. publication in view of the *Nerwin v. Erlichman* (168 USPQ 177, 179 (PTO Bd. Of Int. 1969)) reference and in view of the *In re Japikse* (86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950)) reference. Applicant's claims 4 and 8 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Oochi, et al. publication in view of the Yamada, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,753,911) patent. Applicant has amended applicant's independent claims 1 and 5 and with respect to these claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant's independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a lens apparatus comprising a lens, a stop blade which is adapted to change an area of a light-passing aperture, an optical filter which inserts and removes with respect to a region opposed to the light-passing aperture, a shutter blade which is adapted to open and close the light-passing aperture, and a lens holding member which holds the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, and is movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus, wherein one or two members selected from the group consisting of the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade is/are arranged at one end side of the lens holding member and the other member selected from the group is arranged at the other end side of the lens holding member. Applicant's independent claim 5 has been similarly amended.

The constructions recited in applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 5 are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record. In particular, as recited in applicant's amended

independent claims 1 and 5, the holding member of applicant's invention, which holds the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, is movable in the optical axis direction of the apparatus. As a result, the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade can move with the holding member in the optical axis direction. This arrangement allows the size of the optical filter, the shutter blade and the stop blade to be reduced since the optical filter and the shutter blade can be arranged on light flux narrowed by the stop blade which is movable in the optical axis direction, and because the width of light flux passing through an image-taking optical system generally depends on a lens which is movable in the optical axis direction.

The cited references fail to teach or suggest a lens holding member which holds the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, and which is movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus. In particular, the Oochi, et al. publication discloses a digital camera that includes a lens part (11) comprising a zoom lens (31), a focusing lens (32), an infrared cut filter (33), diaphragm blades (34) and shutter blades (35). FIG. 2 and Paragraph [0037]. The Oochi, et al. publication also discloses that the lens part (11) includes a zoom lens driving part (41) for driving the zoom lens (31), a focusing lens driving part (42) for driving the focusing lens (32), a filter driving circuit (43) for driving the infrared cut filter (33), a diaphragm driving part (44) for driving the diaphragm blades (34) and a shutter driving part (45) for driving the shutter blades (35). Paragraph [0037].

Although the Oochi, et al. publication discloses separate driving parts for driving each of the lenses, the infrared cut filter, and the diaphragm and shutter blades within the lens part, the Oochi, et al. publication is completely silent as to the lens part being movable in any direction. Therefore, there is no teaching or suggestion in the Oochi, et al. publication of the lens part, or the lens holding member, being movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus.

Accordingly, applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 5, which recite such features, and their respective dependent claims, patentably distinguish over the Oochi, et al. publication.

The Yamada, et al. patent also fails to teach or suggest the lens holding member which holds the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, being movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus. Specifically, the Yamada, et al. patent discloses a zoom lens barrel in which a first lens group (73) held by a first lens supporting frame (71) and a second lens group (83) held by a second lens supporting frame (81) are moved. FIGS. 1 and 2; Col. 7, lines 55-60; Col. 8, lines 53-57. The first and second lens supporting frames (71 and 81) are moved by engaging with cam grooves (52, 53) on a cam member (51), which can be rotated around the optical axis and moved parallel to the optical axis. Col. 8, line 64-Col. 9, line 16.

Thus, Yamada, et al. only discloses first and second lens supporting frames (71, 81), each of which holds one lens group, and each of which can be driven in a direction of the optical axis. However, there is no mention in Yamada, et al. of a stop blade, an optical filter or a shutter blade, and thus, there is no teaching or suggestion in Yamada, et al. of any holding member which holds the lens as well as the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, and which is movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus.

Accordingly, applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 5, each of which recites a lens holding member which holds the lens, the stop blade, the optical filter and the shutter blade, and is movable in an optical axis direction of the lens apparatus, and their respective dependent claims, thus patentably distinguish over the Oochi, et al. and the Yamada, et al. references, taken alone or in combination.

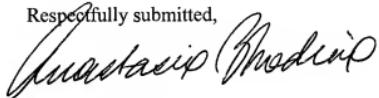
In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is

respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that an interview would expedite consideration of this Amendment or of the application, a request is made that the Examiner telephone applicant's counsel at (212) 790-9286.

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Respectfully submitted,



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